

# System Configuration Team Meeting

March 17, 2005  
NOAA Fisheries Offices, Portland, OR

## ***1. Greetings and Introductions.***

Bill Hevlin welcomed everyone to today's meeting, held March 17 at the NOAA Fisheries offices in Portland, Oregon. He led a round of introductions and a review of today's agenda. The following is a summary (not a verbatim transcript) of the topics discussed and decisions made at this meeting. Anyone with questions or comments about these notes should contact Kathy Ceballos at 503/230-5420.

## ***2. FFDRWG Update.***

David Wills said there was a conference call this morning to discuss the spill gate operation at The Dalles. As you know, he said, the Corps is concerned about the condition of the wire rope that lifts the gates at The Dalles; they cannot be used this year. The Corps has been exploring how to dog the gates open and run the spill gates through the season at a set opening – perhaps six feet early in the spring, eight feet during the peak of the runoff, and six feet during the summer. It was believed that the wire ropes in Bays 1 and 2 may not be in as bad a condition, said Wills; after inspection, the cables in those two bays were found to be usable. that gives the Corps some flexibility in the operation of Bays 1 and 2. At today's conference call, it was decided to use Bays 3-6 at a set opening or openings through the season, and to use Bays 1 and 2 at different openings to get as close to spilling 40% of total river flow as possible, as flow goes up and down during and after the freshet. Bays 1 and 2 are usable this year, but eventually, the wire ropes at those bays will need to be replaced also. Gary Fredricks noted that, if the six bays are open eight feet, that will allow the Corps to spill 40% of total river flow up to a flow of about 180 Kcfs. In the meantime, the Corps has ordered the new cables needed to fix the first six gates, and are fairly confident that those can be installed in time for use next spring, Wills added. The schedule for the other gates is unknown at this point. Are there other projects where this problem may occur in the future? Ron Boyce asked. We're also working on the gates at McNary, John Kranda replied – four have been refurbished, but there are 18 more to go. Some of those other gates are on the verge of not being operable, Marvin Shuttles added; McNary is in the hopper for funding, along with all of the other projects in the country.

Shutters added that the motor of the gantry crane at Lower Granite broke, but should be repaired within a week. Until it is repaired, however, the extended screens at Lower Granite cannot be deployed. In response to a question from Kim Fodrea, the Corps said the Ice Harbor RSW installation has slipped slightly, but is still expected to be complete by March 27. The next Walla Walla District FFDRWG meeting is scheduled for May 11-12; the next Portland District FFDRWG meeting is scheduled for March 31.

### **3. SRWG Update.**

Shutters said that, with respect to the Lower Granite summer RSW evaluation, the plan is to run the evaluation for 20 days, beginning July 1. What we're talking about is two test conditions, he said. The first is the RSW plus 5 Kcfs training spill for a total of 12 Kcfs of spill. We would compare that to 12 Kcfs through the large gate openings, so the comparison would be constant spill conditions, RSW on/off. The SRWG is pretty much in agreement with these two treatments, as the minimum spill volume at which we could get good attraction, he said, adding that BPA is on-board with this approach. Fodrea clarified this statement by saying that Bonneville needs to understand how this evaluation will fit in with the Snake River fall chinook study before signing off on the planned Lower Granite RSW study. That does appear to be doable, however, Shutters added.

I'd like to recommend that Walla Walla District investigate how much flexibility we have in the 11.5, as well as how much flexibility there may be in the MOP operation, to come up with a couple of scenarios that will tell us, if flows change, how we can best keep the study going, Russ Kiefer said. We can also pass on the analysis BPA did on whether or not this is a feasible study, said Shutters - we'll pull everything together and pass it along to the SCT. Tim Wick noted that the July 1 start date is likely to move up, perhaps to as early as June 20. Good, said Hevlin.

Moving on to the topic of the Ice Harbor spring/summer RSW/spill evaluation, Shutters distributed a handout titled "Ice Harbor Removable Spillway Weir - 2005 Operations, Monitoring and Evaluation Plan." The group devoted a few minutes of discussion to its contents. Ultimately, no SCT objections were raised to the Corps' proposed Ice Harbor spring/summer operations.

The discussion then moved on to the Corps' proposed Ice Harbor balloon-tag flow deflector survival and injury evaluation under skimming, undular and plunging flows. The SCT devoted an extensive discussion to the schedule and operations for this test. Ultimately, no consensus was reached, and it was agreed to convene an SCT conference call on March 21 to refine the details of the various Lower Snake study options.

Next, the group took up the proposed modifications to the spring spill evaluations at the collector/transport dams due to low flow conditions. This refers to the spring spill

studies above Ice Harbor that have to be changed because we won't have spill this year, Hevlin explained. Shuttles said that, due to the low forecast flows in the system this year, the objective will be to maximize transport – there will be no spill at Lower Granite, Lower Monumental or Little Goose in 2005. We had planned to do spillway survival studies at each of these projects this year. Shuttles distributed a document titled "Options for Modification of Spring Studies at Collector projects in 2005." The SCT devoted a few minutes of discussion to its contents. Ultimately, it was agreed that the SCT will refine the various spring study options for Lower Granite, Lower Monumental and Little Goose during Monday's conference call.

#### ***4. Continued Discussion of FY'03 CRFM Program.***

The discussion under this agenda item focused on the recent "add-ons" to the FY'05 CRFM program. the first line-item discussed was full-flow PIT-tag detection in the B2 flume; Hevlin observed that it was his understanding that, at the last SCT meeting, the group was in agreement that this project should receive a high funding priority in FY'05. Kranda noted that this line-item is budgeted at \$200,000 in FY'05. No SCT objections were raised to Hevlin's characterization of this SCT decision.

Moving on to the late summer subyearling survival evaluation at B2 (corner collector and powerhouse), the Corps' Brad Eppard said he has recently received a proposal from the USGS for a paired-release study. He said he has suggested using a single-release model which would require fewer fish than what USGS is proposing. He said that, in his opinion, that late in the year, there simply aren't enough fish in the river to accommodate what the USGS is proposing. Ultimately, the SCT recommended that the study examine whether it would be possible to provide a safe route of passage through the corner collector without spill.

The discussion moved on to the Bonneville spillway deflector evaluation – survival and injury with balloon tags. It was agreed that this study has been deferred until it is possible to get "real" spill at Bonneville.

The next topic was the turbine survival program evaluation of pressure with sensor fish at B2 and John Day (FY'05 cost \$250,000). There was general SCT agreement that this study should be funded.

#### ***5. Preliminary Discussion of FY'06 CRFM Priorities.***

It was agreed to defer discussion of this topic until the next SCT meeting.

#### ***6. Next SCT Meeting Date.***

The next meeting of the System Configuration Team was set for Thursday, April 21. Meeting summary prepared by Jeff Kuechle.